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The
L I F E
and
Perambulation



VOL. II.



L O N D O N.

*Printed & sold by John Marshall, N^o. 4
Aldermanry Church Yard in Bow Lane.
& N^o. 17 Queen Street Cheapside
(Price Six Pence in Gilt Paper.)*



DEDICATION.

*To Master *****,*

AS you were pleased to express so much pleasure at reading THE LIFE AND PERAMBULATION OF A MOUSE, and so ardently to wish to know what became of it afterwards, I have endeavoured to gratify your innocent curiosity by again taking up my pen, and for a little while longer *making believe* the MOUSE once more came and talked to me. You, I know, have too much

A good

good sense ever to refuse *instruction*, because it is conveyed to you through the channel of an *entertaining* little book, but are wise enough to receive it with pleasure, and have the gratitude to acknowledge yourself obliged to every one who will take the trouble to give it you, and on that account confess some few thanks due to

Your most sincere Friend,

M. P.

April 13, 1784,

INTRODUCTION.

IT is now some months ago since I took leave of my little readers, promising in case I should ever hear any further tidings of either *Nimble* or *Longtail*, I would certainly communicate it to them: and as I think it extremely wrong not to fulfil any engagement we enter into, I look upon myself bound to give them all the information I have since gained, relating to those two little animals; and doubt not but they will be glad to hear what happened to them, after *Nimble* was frightened from the writing table by the entrance of my servant. If I recollect right, I

have already told you, that I frequently peeped into the hole in the skirting board, and laid bits of cake to try to entice my little companion back, but all to no purpose: and I had quite given over all hopes of ever again seeing him, when one day as I was putting my hand into a large jar which had some Turkey figs in it, I felt something soft at the bottom, and taking it out, found it to be a poor little mouse, not quite dead, but so starved and weak, that upon my placing it upon the table, it had not strength sufficient to get from me. A little boy happened to be standing by me, who, upon the sight of the mouse, began to beg me to give it to the cat, or kill it, "for I don't like mice," said he, "pray Ma'am put it away." "Not like mice!" replied I, "what can be your objection to such a little

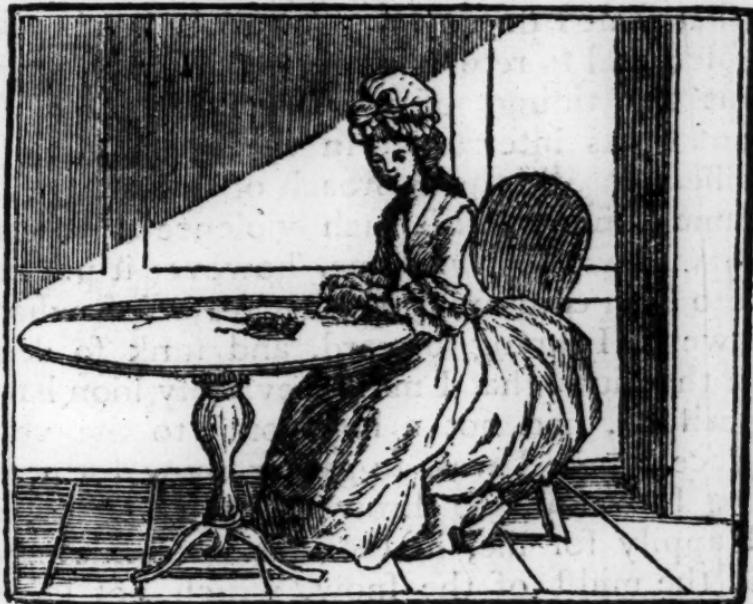
a little soft creature as this?" and taking advantage of its weakness, I picked it up, and held it in the palm of one hand, whilst I stroked it with the fingers of my right. "Poor little mouse," said I, "who can be afraid of such a little object as this? Do you not feel ashamed of yourself, *Joe*, to fear such a little creature as *this*? Only look at it, observe how small it is, and then consider your own size, and surely, my dear, you will blush to think of not being more of a *man*, than to fear a *mouse*! Look at me, *Joe*," continued I, "see I will kiss it, I am not at all afraid that it will hurt me. When lifting it up towards my face, I heard it say in the faintest voice possible, "Do you not know me? I instantly recollected my little friend *Nimble*, and rejoiced at so unexpectedly finding him.

“What! is it *you*? little *Nimble*,” exclaimed I, “that I again behold? Believe me, I am heartily rejoiced once more to find you; but tell me where you have been, what have you done, whom have you seen, and what have you learned since you last left me?” O! replied he, in a voice so low I could scarcely hear him, “I have seen many things, but I am so faint and weak for want of food and fresh air, that I doubt I shall never live to tell you; but, for pity sake, have compassion on me, and either put me out of my present misery by instantly killing me, or else giving me something to eat; for, if you knew my sufferings, I am sure it would grieve your heart.” “Kill you!” returned I, “no, that I will not: on the contrary I will try by every method to restore you to health, and all the happiness

happiness a mouse is capable of feeling." I then instantly sent for some bread, and had the satisfaction of seeing him eat very heartily of it, after which he seemed much refreshed, and began to move about a little more suitably to his *name*, for in truth, when I first found him, no living creature in the world could appear less deserving of the appellation of *Nimble*. I then fetched him a little milk, and gave him a lump of sugar to nibble; after eating of which he begged to retire into some safe little hole to take a nap, from whence he promised to return as soon as he should wake, and accordingly in about an hour he again appeared on my table, and began as follows:

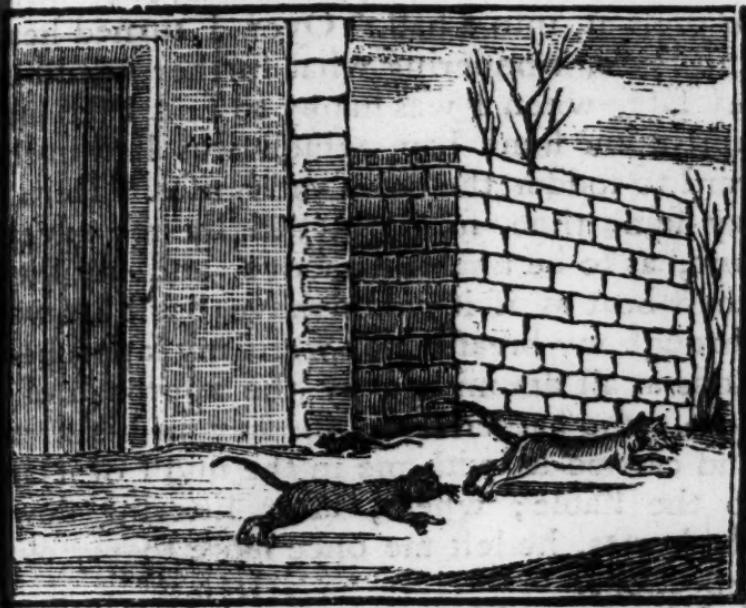
THE
LIFE, &c.
OF A
MOUSE.

I WAS frightened away from you just as I was going to implore your compassion for any unfortunate mouse that might happen to fall within your power; lest you should



destroy

destroy my dear and only surviving brother *Longtail*; but somebody entering the room, prevented me, and after I had regained my hiding place, I resolved to quit the house, and once more set out in search of my beloved. Accordingly with great difficulty I made my way out of the house; but my distress was much increased upon finding the snow so deep upon the ground, that it was utterly impossible for me to attempt to stir, as upon stepping one foot out to try, I found it far too deep for me to fathom the bottom. This greatly distressed me. Alas! said I to myself what shall I do now? To proceed is impossible; and to return is very melancholy, without any tidings of my dear, dear *Longtail*! But I was interrupted in the midst of these reflections, by the approach of two cats, who came running with such violence as to pass rot by without observing me, however it put me! into such consternation, that regardless where all I went, I sprang forward, and sunk so deep in the snow, that I must inevitably soon have perished, had not a boy come to the very place where I was, to gather snow for making snow-balls to throw at his companions. Happily for me, he took me up in his hand in the midst of the snow, which not less a- larmed me, when I considered the sufferings I before



hours before endured, and the cruel death of my affrother *Brighteyes* from the hands of boys. me ! thought I to myself, what new tortures verhall I now experience ? Better had I per-
eeptived in the cold snow, than be spared only
to be tormented by the cruel hands of un-
verlinking children !

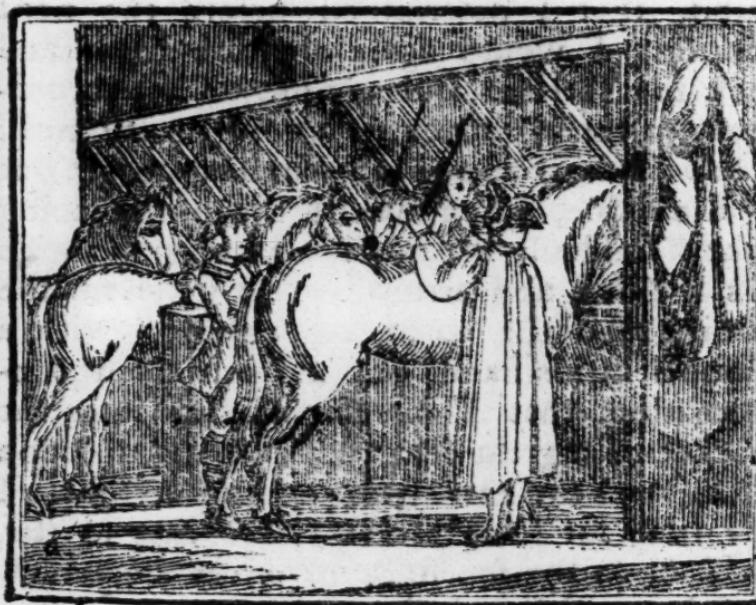
Scarcely had I made this reflection, when
the boy called out, upon seeing me move,
"Lud ! what have I got here ?" and at the
same instant tossed the handful of snow from
him

him in a violent hurry, without attempting to press it into a ball. Over I turned head and heels, wondering what further would be my fate, when I was happy to find I fell un-
hurt upon some hay, which was laid in the
yard to fodder the cows and horses. Here I
lay some time, so frightened by my adven-
ture, as to be unable to move, and my little
heart beat as if it would have burst its way
through my breast: nor were my apprehen-
sions at all diminished by the approach of a man,
who gathered up the hay in his arms
and carried it (with me in the midst of it) into
the stable; where, after littering down
the horses, he left me once more to my own
reflections.

After he had been gone some time, and all
things were quiet, I began to look about me
and soon found my way into a corn bin
where I made a most delicious supper, and
slept free from any disturbance till the morn-
ing, when fearing I might be discovered in
case he should want any of the oats for his
horses, I returned by the same place I entered
and hid myself in one corner of the hay
loft; where I passed the whole of the day
more free from alarm than often falls to the
share of any of my species; and in the even-
ing, again returned to regale myself with the

corn, as I had done the night before. The great abundance with which I was surrounded, strongly tempted me to continue where I was; but then the thoughts of my absent brother imbibed all my peace, and the advice of my mother came so much across my mind, that I determined before the next morning I would again venture forth and seek my fortune and my brother. Accordingly, after having eaten a very hearty meal, I left the bin, and was attempting to get out of the stable, when one of the horses being taken suddenly ill, made so much noise with his kicking and struggling, as to alarm the family, and the coachman entering with a lantern in his hand, put me into such consternation, that I ran for shelter into the pocket of a great coat, which hung up upon a peg next the harness of the horses. Here I lay snug for some hours, not daring to stir, as I smelt the footsteps of a cat frequently pass by, and heard the coachman extol her good qualities to a man who accompanied him into the stable; saying she was the best mouser in the kingdom. "I do not believe," added he, "I have a mouse in the stable or the loft, she keeps so good a look out: for the last two days I lent her to the cook, to put into her pantry, but I have got her back again

again, and I would not part with her for a crown; no not for the best silver crown that ever was coined at the Tower." Then, through a little moth hole in the lining of the coat, I saw him lift her up, stroke her, and



put her upon the back of one of the horses, where she stretched herself out and went to sleep.

In this situation I did not dare to stir. I had too often seen how eager cats are to catch mice, to venture out of the pocket whilst she was so near me, especially, as I did not at all

know

I know the holes or cracks round the stable, and should, therefore, had she jumped down, been quite at a loss where to run. So I determined to continue where I was till either hunger forced me, or the absence of the cat gave a better opportunity of escaping. But scarce had I taken up this resolution when the coachman again entered, and suddenly taking the coat from the peg, put it on, and marched out with me in his pocket.

It is utterly impossible to describe my fear and consternation at this event ; to jump out whilst in the stable exposed me to the jaws of the cat, and to attempt it when out of doors, was but again subjecting myself to be frozen to death, for the snow continued still on the ground ; yet to stay in his pocket was running the chance of suffering a still more dreadful death by the barbarous hands of man ; and nothing did I expect, in case he should find me, but either to be tortured like *Sofidown*, or given to be the sport of his favourite cat, a fate almost as much dreaded as the other. However it was soon put out of my power to determine, for whilst I was debating in my own mind what course I had better take, he mounted the coach-box and drove away with me in his pocket, till he came to a large house about a mile distant from this place ;

there he put down the company he had in the coach, and then drove into the yard. But he had not been there many moments before the coachman of the family he was come to, invited him into the kitchen to warm himself, drink a mug of ale, and eat a mouthful of cold meat. As soon as he entered, and had paid the proper compliments to the Mrs. *Betties* and *Mollies* at the place, he pulled off his great coat, and hung it across the back of his chair. I instantly seized



ed the first opportunity, and whilst they were all busy assembling round the *luncheon* table, made my escape, and ran under a cupboard door close by the chimney, where I had an opportunity of seeing and hearing all that passed, part of which conversation I will relate to you.

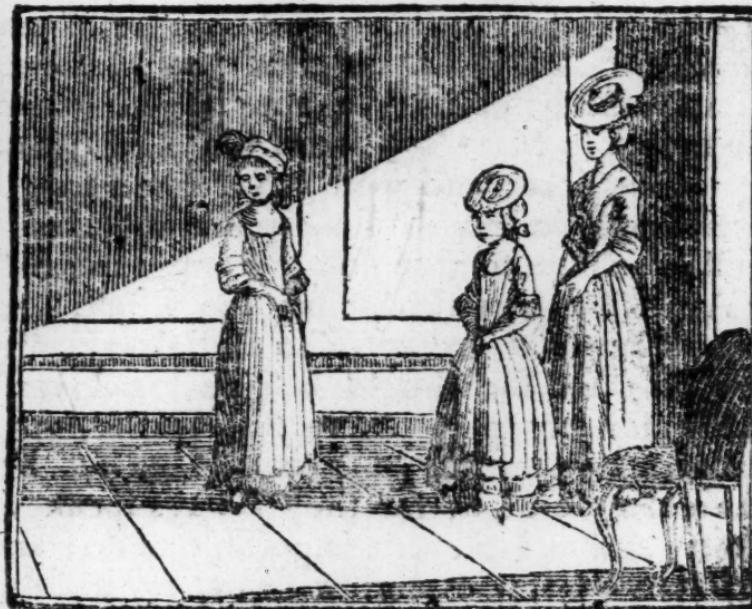
" Well, Mr. *John*," said a footman, addressing himself to the man whose pocket I had just left, " how fare you? are you pretty hearty? You look well I am sure." " Aye, and so I am," replied he, " I never was better in all my life; I live comfortably, have a good master and mistress, eat and drink bravely, and what can a man wish for more? For my part I am quite contented, and if I do but continue to enjoy my health, I am sure I shall be very ungrateful not to be so." " That's true," said the other, " but the misfortune of it is, people never know when they are well off, but are apt to *fret* and *wish*, and *wish* and *fret*, for something or other all their lives, and so never have any enjoyment. Now I for my own part, must needs confess, that I cannot help *wishing* I was a gentleman, and think I should be a deal happier if I was." " Pshaw!" replied *John*, " I don't like now to hear a man say so; it looks as if you were discontented with the state in which

you are placed, and, depend upon it, you are in the one that is *fittest* for you, or you would not have been put into it. And as for being *happier* if you were a gentleman, I don't know what to say to it. To be sure, to have a little more money in one's pocket, nobody can deny that it would be very *agreeable*; and to be at liberty to come in and go out when one pleased, to be sure would be very comfortable. But still, *Bob*, still you may assure yourself, that no state in *this* world is free from care, and if we were turned into *Lords*, we should find many causes for uneasiness. So here's your good health," said he, lifting the mug to his mouth, "wishing, my lad, you may be *contented*, *cheerful*, and *good-humoured*; for without these three requifites, *content*, *cheerfulness*, and *good-humour*, no one person upon earth, rich or poor, old or young, can ever feel comfortable or happy, and so here's to you, I say." "And here's the same good wishes to *you*," said a clean decent looking woman servant, who took up the mug upon *John's* putting it down. "*Content*, *cheerfulness*, and *good-humour*, I think was the toast." Then wiping her mouth as she began her speech, she added, "and an excellent one it is; I wish all folks would mind it, and endeavour to acquire three such good qualifications."

ions." "I am sure," rejoined another female servant, whose name I heard was *Sally*, "I wish so too; at least I wish Miss *Mary* would try to gain a little more of the *good-bumour*, for I never came near such a cross *crab* in my life as it is; I declare I hate the sight of the girl, she is such a proud little *minx*, she would not vouchsafe to speak to a poor servant for the world; as if she thought because we are *poorer*, we were therefore not of the same nature: her sisters, I think, are worth *ten* of her, they always reply so civilly if a body speaks to them, and say, yes, if you please, Mrs. *Sally*, or, no *thank* you Mr. *Bob*; or I should be obliged to you if you would do so and so Mrs. *Nelly*; and not plain *yes* or *no*, as she does; and well too if one can get even that from her; for sometimes I declare she will not deign to give one any answer at all."

"Aye, that is a sure thing she won't," replied the maid servant who first drank, "it is a sad thing she should behave so; I can't think for my part where she learns it; I am sure neither her papa or mamma set her the example of it, for they always speak as pretty and as kind as it is possible to do; and I have heard, with my own ears, my mistress tell her of it twenty and twenty times, but she *will* do so. I am sure it is a sad thing that

that she should, for she will always make people dislike her. I am sure, if young gentlemen and ladies did but know how it makes people love them to speak civilly and kindly, they would take great care not to behave like Miss *Mary*. Do you know, the other day, when Mrs. *Lime*'s maid brought little Miss *Peggy* to see my mistress, when she went away, she made a courtesy to Miss *Mary*, and said, good morning to you Miss. And, would



you think it, the child stood like a stake, and never returned it so much as by a nod of the head, nor did she open her lips. I saw by her looks the maid took notice of it, and I am sure I have such a regard for the family, that I felt quite ashamed of her behaviour." "Oh! she served me worse than that," resumed *Sally*, "for, would you believe it, the other day I begged her to be so kind as to let her mamma know I wanted to speak with her; and I did not chuse to go into the room myself because I was dirty, and there was company there; but for all I desired her *over and over* only just to step in, (and she was at play *close* to the door) yet, could you suppose it possible, she was ill-natured enough to refuse me, and would not do it at last." "Well! if ever I heard the like of that!" exclaimed *John*, whose pocket I had been in, "I think that was being cross indeed, and if a child of mine was to behave in that sulky manner, I would whip it to death almost. I abominate such unkind doings, let every one, I say, *do* as they like to be done *by*, and that is the only way to be happy, and the only way to *deserve* to be so; for if folks will not try to be kind, and oblige others, why should any body try to

please them. And if Miss *Mary* was my girl, and chose to behave rude and cross to the servants, if I was her papa I would order them all to refuse doing any thing for her. I would soon humble her pride I warrant you, for nobody should make her *puddings*, or cut her bread, or do any thing for her till she learned to be *kind* and *civil*, and *thankful* too, for all that was done for her. I have no notion, for my part, for a *child* to give herself such airs for nothing; and because her parents happen to have a little more money in their pockets, for that reason to think she may be *rude* to *poor* folks; what though servants are *poor*, still surely they are *richer* than *she* is. I should like to ask her how much money she has got? and which way she came by it? A *child* I am sure is no richer than a *beggar*, for they have not a farthing that is not *given* them through mere bounty; whereas a servant, who works for his living, has a *right* and *just claim* to his wages, and may truly call them his *own*; but a *child* has not one farthing that is not its parents. So here's my service to *Miss*," said he (again lifting the ale-mug to his mouth) "and wishing her a speedy reformation of manners I drink to her very good health."

John
ney

John drank to the bottom of the mug, and then shaking the last drop into the ashes under the grate, he told the following story as he sat swinging the mug by its handle across his two fore-fingers, which he had joined for that purpose.



"When my father was a young man he lived at one Mr. Speedgo's, as upper footman; they were vastly rich. Mr. Speedgo was a merchant, and by good luck he gathered gold as

as fast as his neighbours could pick up stones (as a body may say.) So they kept two or three carriages, there was a *coach* and a *chariot* and a *phaeton*, and I can't tell what besides; and a *power* of servants you may well suppose to attend them all; and very well they lived with plenty of victuals and drink. But though they wanted for nothing, still they were never much loved either their master or mistresses, they used to give their orders in a *haughty* and *imperious* a manner; and if asked a civil question, answer so *shortly*, as if they thought their servant not worthy of their notice: so that in short, no one loved them nor their children either, for they brought them up just like themselves, to despise every one poorer than they were; and to speak a cross to their servants as if they had been many adders they were afraid would bite them.

“ I have heard my father say, that if Master *Speedgo* wanted his horse to be got ready he would say, ‘ *Saddle my horse!*’ in such a displeasing manner as made it quite a burthen to do any thing for him. Or if the young ladies wanted a piece of bread and butter, or cake, they would say, ‘ *Give me a bit of cake;*’ or if they added the word *pray* to it, they spoke in such a *grumpy* way, as plainly showed they thought

thought themselves a *deal* better than their servants; forgetting that an *honest* servant is just as worthy a member of society as his master, and whilst he behaves well, as much deserving of *civility* as any body. But to go on with my story, I have already told you Mr. *Speedgo* was very rich and very *proud*, nor would he, on any account, suffer any one to visit at his house whom he thought *below* him, as he called it; or at least if he did, he always took care to behave to them in such a manner, as plainly to let them know he thought he shewed a *mighty favour* in conversing with them."

" Amongst the rest of the servants there was one *Molly Mount*, as good a hearted girl, my father says, as ever lived; she had never received much education, because her parents could not afford to give her any, and she learned to read after she was at Mr. *Speedgo*'s, from one of the house-maids, who was kind enough to teach her a little; but you may suppose from such kind of teaching, she was no very good scholar. However, she read well enough to be able to make out some chapters in the Bible; and an excellent use she made of them, carefully fulfilling every duty she there found recommended as necessary for a Christian to practise. She

used often to say, she was perfectly contented in her station, and only wished for more money that she might have it in her power to do more good. And sometimes when she was dressing and attending the young ladies of the family, she would advise them to behave prettier than they did; telling them



‘ that by kindness and civility they would be so far from *losing* respect, that on the contrary they would much gain it. For we cannot, (she would very truly say) have any respect

pect for those people who seem to forget their human nature, and behave as if they thought themselves superior to the rest of their fellow creatures. Young ladies and gentlemen have no occasion to make themselves very *intimate* and *familiar* with their servants; but every body ought to speak *civilly* and *good-humouredly*, let it be to whom it will; and if I *was* a lady I should make it a point never to *look cross*, or *speak gruffly* to the poor, for fear they should think, I forgot I was of the same human nature as they were.' By these kind of hints, which every now and then she would give to the Misses, they were prodigiously offended, and complained of her *insolence*, as they called it, to their mamma, who very wrongly, instead of teaching them to behave better, joined with them in blaming *Molly* for her freedom, and to show her displeasure at her conduct, put on a still haughtier air, whenever she spoke to her, than she did to any of the other servants. *Molly*, however, continued to behave extremely well, and often very seriously lamented in the kitchen the wrong behaviour of the family. 'I don't mind it, she would say, 'for my own part, I know that I do my duty; and their cross looks, and proud behaviour, can do me no real harm; but I cannot

help grieving for their sakes ; it distresses me to think, that people who ought to know better, should by their ill conduct, make themselves so many enemies, when they could so easily gain friends ; I am astonished how any body can act so foolishly.' In this sensible manner she would frequently talk about the *sin* as well as *folly* of pride. And one day, as she was talking to her fellow-servants, rather louder than in prudence she



ought to have done, her two young ladies overheard her ; and the next time she went

to

to dress them, they inquired what it was she had been saying to the other maids. 'Indeed, ladies,' said she, 'I hope you will excuse my telling you, I think, if you give yourselves time to reflect a little, you will not insist upon knowing, as that certainly is beneath such *rich ladies* as you are, to concern yourselves with what *poor servants* talk about.' This answer however did not satisfy them, and they positively commanded her to let them know. *Molly* was by far too good a woman to attempt to *deceive* any body; she therefore replied, 'If ladies, you insist upon knowing what I said, I hope you will not take any thing amiss that I may tell you, thus *compelled* as I am by your *commands*. You must know then, Miss *Betsy* and Miss *Rachael*, that I was saying how sad a thing it was for people to be, *proud* because they are rich; or to fancy, because they happen to have a little more money, that for that reason they are better than their servants, when in reality the whole that makes one person *better* than another is, having superior *virtues*, being *kinder* and more *good-natured*, and readier to *assist* and *serve* their fellow creatures. These are the qualifications, I was saying, that make people beloved, and not being possessed of money. Money indeed may procure

servants to do their business for them, but it is not in the power of all the riches in the world to purchase the *love* and *esteem* of any one. What a sad thing then is it, when gentlefolks behave so as to make themselves *despised*, and that will ever be the case with all those, who like (excuse me ladies, you insisted upon my telling you what I said) who like Miss *Betsy*, and Miss *Rachael*, and Master *James*, show such contempt to all their inferiors. Nobody would wish children of their fortunes to make themselves too free, or play with their servants; but if they were little kings and queens, still they ought to speak *kind* and *civil* to every one. Indeed our good King and Queen would scorn to behave like the children of this family, and if" —She was going on but they stopped her, saying, “*If* you say another word we will push you out of the room this moment, you *rude*, *bold*, *insolent* woman, you ought to be ashamed of speaking so disrespectfully of your *betters*; but we will tell our mamma, that we will, and she won’t suffer you to allow your tongue such liberties.” ‘*If*,’ replied *Molly*, ‘I have offended you I am sorry for it, and beg your pardon, ladies; I am sure I had no wish to do so; and you should remember, that you both insisted upon my telling

telling you what I had been saying.' 'So we did,' said they, 'but you had *no business* to say it at all, and I *promise* you my mamma shall know it.'

" In this manner they went on for some time; but to make short of my story, they represented the matter in such a manner to their mother, that she dismissed *Molly* from her service, with a strict charge never to visit the house again. 'For,' said Mrs. *Speedgo*, 'no servant who behaves as you have done, shall ever enter my doors again,



or

or eat another mouthful in my house.' *Molly* had no desire so suddenly to quit her place; but as her conscience perfectly acquitted her of any wilful crime, after receiving her wages, respectfully wishing all the family their health, and taking a friendly leave of her fellow servants, she left the house; and soon engaged herself as dairy-maid in a farmer's family about three miles off. In which place she behaved so extremely well, and so much to the satisfaction of her master and mistress, that, after she had lived there a little more than two years, with their entire approbation, she was married to their eldest son, a sober worthy young man, to whom his father gave a fortune not much less than three thousand pounds, with which he bought and stocked a very pretty farm in *Somersetshire*; where they lived as happy as virtue and affluence could make them. By industry and care they prospered beyond their utmost expectations, and by their prudence and good behaviour gained the esteem and love of all who knew them.

"To their servants (for they soon acquired riches enough to keep three or four, I mean household ones, besides the number that were employed in the farming business) they behaved with such *kindness* and *civility*, that had

the

they even given less wages than their neighbours, they would never have been in want of any; every one being desirous of getting into a family where they were treated with such kindness and condescension.

" In this happy manner they continued to live for many years, bringing up a large family of children to imitate their virtues; but one great mortification they were obliged to submit to, which was that of putting their children very early to boarding school, a circumstance which the want of education in Mrs. and indeed I may add Mr. *Flail*, rendered absolutely necessary.

" But I am afraid Mrs. *Sally* and Mrs. *Nelly*, you will be tired, as I have but half told my story yet; but I will try to make short work of it, though indeed it deserves to be noticed, for it may teach one a great deal, and convince one how little the world's riches are to be depended on.

" I have told you, you know, that Mr. *Speedgo* was a merchant, and a very rich one too. It is unknown what vast sums of money he used to spend! When, would you think it, either through spending it too fast, or some losses he met with in trade, he broke all to nothing, and had not a farthing to pay his creditors. I forget how many thousand pounds

pounds it was he owed, but I know it was a *vast great* many. Well! this you may be sure was a great mortification to them; they begged for mercy from their creditors; but as in their prosperity they had never shown much mercy themselves to those they thought *beneath* them, so now they met with very little from others: the *poor* saying they *deserved* it for their *pride*; the *rich* condemning them for their *presumption*, in trying to *mix* with those of superior birth; and those who had been less successful in business, blaming them for their *extravagance*, which, they said, had justly brought on them their misfortunes.

“ In this distress, in vain it was they applied for assistance to those they had esteemed *their friends*; for as they had never been careful to form their connections with people of *real merit*, only seeking to be acquainted with those who were *rich* and *prosperous*, so now they could no longer return their civilities, they found none very ready to show them any; but every one seemed anxious to keep from them as much as possible. Thus distressed, and finding no one willing to help them, the young Squire Master *James*, was obliged to go to sea; whilst Miss *Betsy* and Miss *Rachael*, were even forced to try to get

their

their living by service, a way of life they were but ill qualified to undertake; for they had always so accustomed themselves to be waited on and attended, that they scarcely knew how to help themselves, much less to work for others. The consequence of which was, they gave so little satisfaction to their employers, that they staid but a little time in a place; and from so frequently changing, no family who wished to be well settled, would admit them, as they thought it impossible those could be good servants, whom no one thought worthy of keeping.

" It is impossible to describe the many and great mortifications these two young ladies met with! They now frequently recollect the words of *Molly Mount*, and earnestly wished they had attended to them whilst it was in their power, as by so doing they would have secured to themselves friends. And they very forcibly found, that although they were *poor*, and *servants*, yet they were as sensible of *kind treatment* and *civility*, as if they had been richer.

" After they had been for some years changing from place to place, always obliged to put up with very low wages, upon account of their being so ill qualified for servants, it happened that *Miss Betsy* got into service

service at *Watchet*, a place about three miles distant from Mr. *Flail*'s farm. Here she had a violent fit of illness, and not having been long enough in the family to engage their generosity to keep her, she was dismissed upon account of her ill health rendering her wholly incapable of doing that business for which she was hired. She then, with the very little money she had, procured lodgings in a miserable little dirty cottage but through weakness being unable to work she soon exhausted her whole stock, and was even obliged to quit this habitation bad as it was, and for some days supported herself wholly by begging from door to door often meeting with very unkind language for so idle an employment; some people telling her to go to her parish, when, alas! her parish was many miles distant, and the poor creature, had no means of getting there.

"At last she wandered in this distressful situation to the house of Mr. *Flail*, and walked into the farm yard just at the time the cows were being milked. She who for a long time had tasted nothing but bits of broken bread, and had no drink besides water she had scooped up in her hands, looked at the quantity of fresh milk with a most wishful eye; and going to the women who



were milking, she besought them in a moving manner to give her a draught, as she was almost ready to perish. 'For pity sake,' said she, 'have compassion upon a poor wretch, dying with sickness, hunger and thirst; it is a long time since I have tasted a mouthful of wholesome viands, my lips are now almost parched with thirst, and I am so faint for want, that I can scarcely stand; my sufferings are very great indeed, it would melt a heart of stone to hear the story of my woes. Oh! have pity upon a poor fellow creature

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then, and give me one draught of that milk, which can never be missed out of so vast a quantity as you have there, and may you never, never know what it is to suffer as I now do.' To this piteous request she received for answer that common one of ' Go about your business, we have nothing for you, so don't come here.' ' We should have enough to do indeed,' said one of the milkers. ' if we were to give to every idle beggar who would like a draught of this delicious milk; but no, indeed, we shall not give you a drop, so go about your business, and don't come plaguing us here.' Mrs. Flail, who happened to be in the yard with one of her children who was feeding the chickens, overheard enough of this to make her come forward, and inquire what was the the matter? ' Nothing, ma'am,' replied the milk-maid, ' only I was sending away this nasty dirty creature, who was so bold as to come asking for milk indeed! But beggars grow so *impudent* now-a-days there never was the like of it.' ' O fie!' returned Mrs. Flail, shocked at her inhuman way of speaking, ' fie upon you to speak in so unkind a manner of a poor creature in distress.' Then, turning to the beggar, she inquired what she wanted in so

mild a tone of voice, that it encouraged her to speak and tell her distress.

"Mrs. Flail listened with the greatest attention, and could not help being struck with her speech, and appearance; for though she was clothed in rags, (having parted with all her better clothes to pay for lodging and food) still there was a *something* in her *language* and *manner*, which discovered she was no common beggar. Betsy had stood all the time with her eyes fixed upon the ground, scarcely once lifting them to look at the face of Mrs. Flail; and she was so changed herself, by her troubles and sickness, that it was impossible for any one, who had not seen her since she appeared as the eldest Miss Speedgo, to recollect her in her present miserable state. Mrs. Flail, however, wanted no further inducement to relieve her than to hear she was in want. 'Every fellow creature in distress,' she used to say, 'was a proper object for her bounty; and whilst she was blessed with plenty, she thought it her duty to relieve, as far as she prudently could all whom she knew to be in need.' She therefore fetched a mug, and filling it with milk herself, gave it to the poor woman to drink. 'Here,' said she, 'take this, good woman, and I hope it will refresh and be of



service to you.' *Betsy* held out her hand for it, and lifting up her eyes to look at Mrs. *Flail*, whilst she thanked her for her kindness, was greatly astonished to discover in her bene factrels, the features of her old servant *Molly* *Mount*. 'Blefs me!' said she, with an air of confusion, 'What do I see? Who is it? Where am I? Madam! pardon my boldness, but pray—forgive me, ma'am, but is not your name *Mount*?' 'It was,' replied Mrs. *Flail*, 'but I have been married for thirteen years.

to a Mr. *Flail*, and that is my name now. But pray where did you ever see me before? or how came you to know any thing of me?" Poor *Betsy* could return no answer, her *shame* at being seen by her servant that was, in her present condition, and the *consciousness* of having so ill treated that *very* servant, to whose kindness she was now indebted; all together were too much for her in her weak state, and she fell senseless at Mrs. *Flail's* feet.

"This still added to Mrs. *Flail's* surprize, and she had her carried into the house and laid upon a bed, where she used every means to bring her to herself again; which, after a considerable time, succeeded; and she then (covered with *shame* and *remorse*) told her who she was, and how she came into that miserable condition. No words can describe the astonishment Mrs. *Flail* was in, at hearing the melancholy story of her sufferings; nor is it possible to tell with what generosity and kindness she strove to comfort her, telling her to compose herself, for she should no longer be in want of any thing. 'I have, thank heaven,' said she, 'a most worthy good man for my husband, who will rejoice with me in having it in his power to relieve a suffering fellow creature. Do not therefore

fore any longer distress yourself upon what passed between us formerly. I had for my part forgotten it, if you had not now told it me; but however I might then take the liberty to censure you for too much haughtiness, I am sure I have no occasion to do so now. Think no more therefore, I beseech you, upon those times which are now past; but be comforted, and make yourself as happy as in my humble plain manner of living you can possibly do.'

" She then furnished her with some of her own clothes, till she could procure her new ones, and sent immediately for a physician from the next town; by following of whose prescription, together with good nursing, and plenty of all necessaries, she soon recovered her health; but she was too deeply affected with the thoughts of her former misconduct ever to feel happy in her situation, though Mrs. *Flail* used every method in her power to render her as comfortable as possible. Nor did she confine her goodness only to this one daughter, but sent also for her sister and mother, (her father being dead) and fitted up a little neat house for them near their own. But as the *Flails* could not afford wholly to maintain them for nothing, they entrusted the poultry to their care; which enabled them

them to do with one servant less; and by that means they could, without any great expence, afford to give them sufficient to make their lives comfortable; that is, as far as their own *reflections* would let them; for the last words Mrs. Speedgo spake to *Molly*, when she parted from her, dwelt continually upon her mind, and filled her with shame and remorse.



‘I told her,’ said she, ‘that she shoud never again come into my doers, or eat another

another mouthful in my house : and now it is *her* bounty alone which keeps us all from perishing. O! how unworthy are we of such goodness! True indeed was what she told you, that *kindness* and *virtue* were far more valuable than *riches*. Goodness and kindness, no time or change can take from us; but *riches* soon fly as it were away, and then what are we the better for having once been possessed of them."

Here Mr. *John* stopped, and jumping hastily up, and turning round to Mrs. *Sally*, Mrs. *Nelly*, and Mr. *Bob*, exclaimed, rubbing his hands, "There, ladies, I have finished my story; and let me tell you, so long preaching has made my throat dry, so another mug of ale if you please, Master *Bobby*," (tapping him at the same time upon the shoulder) "another mug of ale, my boy, for *faith* talking at the rate I have done, is enough to wear a man's lungs out, and in truth I have need of something to *hearten* me after such a fatigue."

"Well, I am sure," replied Mrs. *Sally* and Mrs. *Nelly*, in the same breath, "we are greatly obliged to you for your history; and I am sure it deserves to be framed and glazed, and it ought to be hung up in the hall of every family, that all people may see the

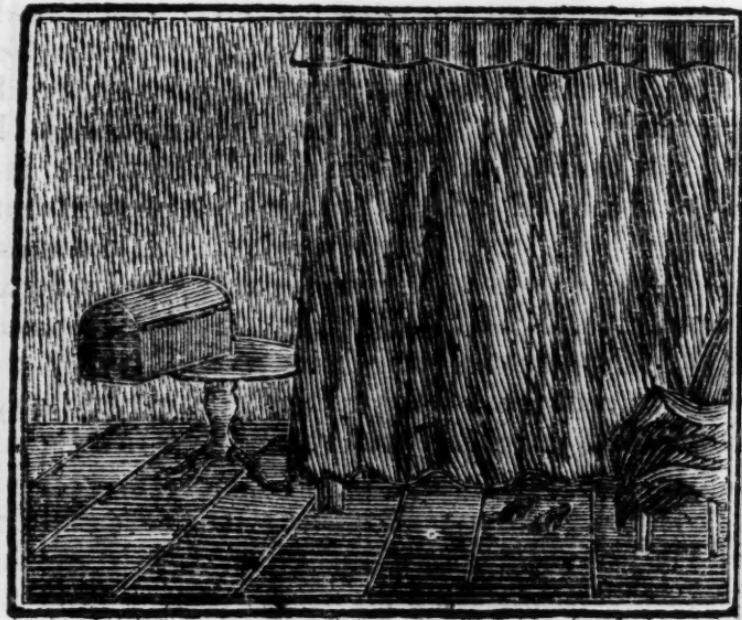
the sad effects of pride, and how little cause people have, because they are *rich*, to despise those who are *poor*; since it frequently happens, that those who this year are like little kings, may the next be beggars; and then they will repent when it is too late, of all their *pride* and unkindness they showed to those beneath them."

Here the conversation was put a stop to by the bell ringing, and *John* being ordered to drive to the door. I, who during the whole of the history, had been feasting upon a mince-pie, now thought it safer to conceal myself in a little hole in the wainscot of the closet, where, finding myself very safe, I soon fell into a sound sleep, from which I did not awake till midnight. After the family were all retired to rest, I peeped out of the hole, and there saw just such another frightful trap as that which was the prelude to poor *Softdown's* sufferings. Startled at the sight, I retreated back as expeditiously as possible, nor ever stopped till I found my way into a bed-chamber, where lay two little girls fast asleep.

I looked about for some time, peeping into every hole and corner, before I could find any thing to eat, there not being so much as a candle in the room with them.

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At last I crept into a little leathern trunk, which stood on a table, not shut down quite close; here I instantly smelt something good; but was obliged to gnaw through a great deal of linen to get at it, as it was wrapped up in a *lap-bag* amongst a vast quantity of work. However, I made my way through half a hundred folds, and at last was amply repaid by finding out a nice piece of plum-cake, and the pips of an apple, which I could easily get at, one half of it having been eat



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away, Whilst I was thus engaged I heard a cat mew, and not knowing how near she might be, I endeavoured to jump out; but in a hurry, I somehow or other entangled myself in the muslin, and pulled that, trunk and all, down with me: for the trunk stood half off the table, so that the least touch in the world overset it, otherwise my weight could never have tumbled it down.

The noise of the fall, however, waked the children, and I heard one say to the other, "Bless me! *Mary*, what is that noise? What *can* it be? I am almost frightened out of my wits! do, pray sister, hug me close!" "Pough!" replied the other, "never mind it! What in the world need you be frightened at? What do you suppose will hurt you? It sounded as if something fell down; but as it has not fallen upon us, and I do not hear any body stirring or speaking as if they were hurt, what need we care about it? So pray, *Nancy*, let us go to sleep again, for as yet I have not had half sufficient I am sure; I hope morning is not coming yet, for I am not at all ready to get up." "I am sure," answered the other, "I *wish* it was morning and day-light now, for I should like to get up vastly, I do not like to lay here in the dark any longer; I have a great mind to ring

ring the bell, and then mamma or somebody will come to us with a candle." "And what in the world," rejoined *Mary*, "will be the use of that? Do you want a candle to light you to look for the wounds the *noise* has given you, or what can you wish to disturb my mamma for? Come, let me cuddle you, and do go to sleep child, for I cannot think what occasion there is for us to keep awake because we heard a noise, I never knew that *noise* had *teeth* or *claws* to hurt one with; and I am sure this has not hurt me, and so, whether you chuse to lie awake or not, I will go to sleep, and so good-bye to you, and pray do not disturb me any more, for I *cannot* talk any longer." "But, *Mary*," again replied the other, "pray do not go to sleep yet, I want to speak to you." "Well, what do you want to say?" inquired *Mary*. "Why pray have not you very often," said *Nancy*, "heard of *thieves* breaking into people's houses and robbing them, and I am sadly afraid that noise was some rogues coming in; so pray, *Mary*, do not go to sleep, I am in such a fright and tremble you cannot think. Speak, *Mary*, have not you, I say, heard of *thieves*?" "Yes," replied *Mary*, in a very sleepy voice, "a great many times." "Well then, pray sister, do not go to sleep;" said *Nancy*

Nancy, in a peevish accent, “suppose, I say, that noise we heard should be thieves, what should we do? What will become of us? O! what shall we do?” “Why go to sleep, I tell you,” said *Mary*, “as fast as you can; at least do pray let me, for I cannot say I am in the smallest fear about *house-breakers*, or *house-makers* either; and of all the robberies I ever heard of in all my life, I never heard of thieves stealing little *girls*, so do, there’s a *dear* girl, go to sleep again, and do not so foolishly frighten yourself out of your wits for nothing.” “Well!” replied *Nancy*, “I will not keep you awake any longer, but I am sure *I* shall not be able to get another *wink* of sleep all night.”

Here the conversation ended, and I could not help thinking how foolish it was for people so to permit themselves to be terrified for nothing. Here is a little girl now, thought I, in a nice clean room, and covered up warm in bed, with pretty green curtains drawn round her, to keep the wind from her head, and the light in the morning from her eyes; and yet she is distressing herself, and making herself really uncomfortable and unhappy, only because *I*, a poor, little, harmless *mouse*, with scarcely strength sufficient to gnaw a

nut-shell, happened to jump from the table, and throw down, perhaps, her own box. Oh what a pity it is that people should so destroy their own comfort! how sweetly might this child have passed the night, if she had but, like her sister, wisely reflected that a *noise* could not possibly hurt them: and that, had any of the family occasioned it, by falling down, or running against any thing in the dark which hurt them, most likely they would have heard some more stirring about.

And upon this subject the Author cannot help, in *human* form, (as well as in that of a *mouse*) observing how extremely ridiculous it is, for people to suffer themselves to be terrified upon every trifling occasion that happens; as if they had no more resolution than a *mouse* itself, which is liable to be destroyed every meal it makes. And surely nothing can be more absurd than for children to be afraid of *thieves* and *house-breakers*; since, as little *Mary* said, they never want to seek after *children*. Money is all they want; and as children have very seldom much of that in their possession, they may assure themselves they are perfectly safe, and have therefore no occasion to alarm themselves if they hear a noise, without being able to make out what

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it is; unless indeed, like the child I have just been writing about, they would be so silly as to be frightened at a little *mouse*: for most commonly the noises we hear if we lay awake in the night, are caused by mice running about and playing behind the wainscot; and what reasonable person would suffer themselves to be alarmed by such little creatures as those? But it is time I should return to the history of my little *make-believe* companion, who went on, saying —

The conversation I have been relating, I overheard as I lay concealed in a *shoe* that stood close by the bed-side, and into which I ran the moment I jumped off the table, and where I kept snug till the next morning; when, just as the clock was striking eight, the same Mrs. *Nelly*, whom I saw the day before in the kitchen, entered the apartment, and accosted the young ladies, saying, "Good morning to you ladies, Do you know that it is time to get up?" "Then, pray, *Nelly*, lace my stays, will you?" said Miss *Nancy*. But lace *mine* first, and give me my other shoes, for those I wore yesterday *must* be



brushed, because I stepped in the dirt, and so when you go down you *must* remember and take and brush them, and then *let* me have them again," said *Mary*; "but come and dress me *now*."

Well! thought I, this is a rude way of speaking indeed, something like Miss *Nancy Artless*, at that house where my poor dear *Softdown* was so cruelly massacred; I am sure I hope I shall not meet with the like fate here, and I wish I was safely out of this shoe, for

for perhaps presently it will be wanted to be put upon *Mary's* foot; and I am sure I must not expect to meet any mercy from a child, who shows so bad a disposition as to speak to a servant in so uncivil a manner, for no *good-natured* person would do that.'

With these kind of reflections I was amusing myself for some little time; when, all on a sudden, they were put an end to, by my finding the shoe in which I was concealed, hastily taken up; and before I had time to



recollect what I had best do, I was almost killed by some violent blows I received, which well nigh broke every bone in my skin. I had crept quite up to the toe of the shoe, so that I was not at all seen, and the maid when she took up the shoes, held one in one hand and the other in her other, by their heels, and then slapped them hard together, to beat out some of the dust which was in them. This she repeated three or four times, till I was quite stunned; and how or which way I tumbled or got out I know not; but when I came to myself, I was close up behind the foot of a table, in a large apartment, where were several children and a gentleman and lady, all conversing together, with the greatest good-humour and harmony.

The first words I heard distinctly enough to remember, were those of a little boy, about five years old, who, with eagerness exclaimed, "I forget you! no that I never shall. If I was to go a *hundred thousand* miles off, I am sure I should never forget you. What! do you think I should ever, as *long* as I *live*, if it is a *million* of years, forget my own dear papa and mamma? No! that I should not, I am *very very sure* I never should." "Well, but *Tom*," interrupted the gentleman,

gentleman, " if in a *million* of years you should not forget *us*, I dare say in less than two *months* you will forget our *advice*, and before you have been at school half that time you will get to squabbling with, and tricking, the other boys, just as they do with one another: and instead of playing at all times, with the strictest openness and honour, you will, I sadly fear, learn to *cheat* and *deceive*, and pay no attention to what your mother and I have been telling you."

" No! *that* I am *sure* I shan't!" replied the boy. " What do you think I shall be so *wicked* as to turn a *thief*, and *cheat* people?" " I dare say, my dear," resumed the father, " you will not do what you call *thieving*; but as I know there are many naughty boys in all schools, I am afraid they will teach you to commit *dishonourable* actions, and tell you there is no *harm* in them, and that they are signs of *cleverness* and *spirit*, and qualifications very necessary for every boy to possess." —

" Aye, that's sure enough," said a boy, who appeared about ten years old, " for they almost all declare, that if a boy is not *sharp* and *cunning*, he might almost as well be out of the world as in it. But as you say papa, I *bate* such behaviour. I am sure there is one of our boys who is so wonderfully *clever* and *acute*, as

as they call him, that I detest ever having any thing to do with him; for unless one watches him as a cat would watch a mouse, he is sure to cheat or play one some trick or other," "What sort of tricks do you mean?" inquired the little boy. "Why, I will tell you," resumed the other. "You know nothing of the games we have at school, so if I was to tell you how he plays at them, you would not understand what I meant. But you know what walking about blindfold is, don't you? Well! one day, about a dozen of the boys agreed to have a blind race, and the boy who got nearest the goal, which was a stick driven in the ground with a shilling upon the top of it, was to win the shilling, provided he did it fairly without seeing." "I suppose," interrupted Tom, "you mean the boy who got to the stick first." "No, I do not," replied his brother, "I mean what I say, the boy who got *nearest* it, no matter whether he came first or last; for the fun was to see them try to keep in a straight path with their eyes tied up, whilst they wander quite in the wrong, and not to try who could run *fastest*. Well! when they were all blinded, and twisted round three or four

times



times before they were suffered to set off, they directed their steps the way they thought would directly conduct them to the goal; and some of them had almost reached it, when Sharply (the boy I mentioned) who had placed the shilling upon the stick, for they drew lots who should do that, and he who furnished the money, was to stand by it, to observe who won it by coming nearest. — Well, Sharply, I say, just as they came close to it, moved it away *safely* to another place, above three

three yards distant from any of them! (for I should have told you, that if none of them got within three yards, the shilling was to remain his, and they were each to give him a penny.) So then he untied their eyes, and insisted upon it, they had all of them lost. But two or three of us happening to be by, and so we said he had *cheated* them, and ought not to keep the money, as it had fairly been won by *Smyth*. But he would not give it up, and so it made a quarrel between him and *Smyth*, and at last they fought, and Mr. *Chiron* confined them both in the school all the rest of the afternoon, and when he heard what the quarrel was about, he took the shilling from *Sharply*, and called him a *mean-spirited cheat*; but he would not let *Smyth* have it, because he said he deserved to lose it after fighting about such a trifle, and so it was put into the forfeit money."

"But pray do not you think *Sharply* behaved extremely wrong?" "Shamefully indeed," said the gentleman. "I never could have any opinion of a boy who could act so dishonourably," said the lady, "let his cleverness be what it would." "Pray, *Frank*, tell me some more," said the little boy. "More," replied *Frank*, "I could tell you an hundred such kind of things. One time

as *Peter Light* was walking up the yard, with some damsons in his hat, *Sharply* ran by, and as he passed, knocked his hat out of his hand, for the sake of scrambling for as many as he could get himself. And sometimes after the pie-woman has been there, he gets such heaps of tarts you cannot think, by his different tricks: perhaps he will buy a current tart for himself, then he will go about calling out, "Who'll change a cheesecake for a currant tart!" and now and then he will add, "and half a bun into the bargain!" Then two or all three of the boys call out, *I will, I will*; and when they go to hold out their cheesecakes to him, he snatches them out of their hands before they are aware, and runs away in an instant: and whilst they stand for a moment in astonishment, he gets so much a-head of them, that he eats them up before they can again overtake him. At other times when he sees a boy beginning to eat his cake, he will come and talk carelessly to him for a few moments, and then all on a sudden call out, "Look! look! look there!" pointing his finger as if to show him something very wonderful; and when the other, without suspecting any mischief, turns his head to see what has so surprised him, away he snatches the cake, and

and runs off with it, cramming it into his mouth in a moment.



“ And when he plays at Handy, dandy Jack-a-dandy, which will you have, upper the hand or lower?” if you happen to guess right, he slips whatever you are playing with ^{extra} into his other hand, and that you know is led not playing fair; and so many of the boys as tell him; but he does not mind any of us ^{admire} And as he is very clever at his learning, and ^{always} V

always does all his exercises quite right, Mr. *Chiron* (who indeed does not know of his tricks) is very fond of him, and is forever saying what a clever fellow he is, and proposing him as an example to the rest of the boys; and I do believe many of them imitate his deceitful cheating tricks, only for the sake of being thought like him."

"Aye! it is a sad thing," interrupted the gentleman, "that people who are blessed with sense and abilities to behave well, should so misuse them, as to set a *bad*, instead of *good* example to others, and by that mean draw many into sin, who, otherwise, perhaps, might never have acted wrong. Was this *Sharply*, you have been speaking of, a dunce and blockhead at his book, he would never gain the commendations Mr. *Chiran* now bestows on him; and consequently, no boy would wish to be thought like him; his bad example therefore would not be of half the importance it now is.

"Only think then, my dear children, how *extremely wicked* it is, for those who are blessed with understandings capable of acting as they should do, and making people admire them; at the same time to be guilty of such *real* and *great sins*. For, however,

children at play may like to *trick* and *deceive* each other, and call it only *play* and *fun*; still, let me tell you, they are much mistaken if they flatter themselves there is no *harm* in it. It is a very *wrong* way of behaviour; it is *mean*, it is *dishonourable*, and it is *wicked*; and the boy or girl who would ever permit themselves to act in so unjustifiable a manner, however they may excel in their *learning*, or *exterior* accomplishments, can never be deserving of *esteem*, *confidence*, or *regard*. What *esteem* or respect could I ever entertain of a person's sense or learning, who made no better use of it, than to practise wickedness with more *dexterity* and *grace*, than he otherwise would be able to do? Or what *confidence* could I ever place in the person who, I knew, only wanted a convenient opportunity to *defraud*, *trick*, and *deceive* me? Or what *regard* and love could I possibly entertain for such an one, who, unless I kept a constant watch over, as I must over a wild beast, would, like a wild beast, be sure to do me some injury?—Would it be possible, I say, to love such a character, whatever shining abilities, or depth of learning he might possess? Ask your own hearts,

hearts, my dears, whether you think you could?"

" To this they all answered at once, " No, that I could not," and " I am sure I could not." " Well then," resumed the father, " only think how odious that conduct must be, which robs us of the *esteem*, *confidence*, and *love* of our fellow creatures; and that too, notwithstanding we may at the same time be very *clever*, and have a great deal of *sense* and *learning*. But, for my part, I confess I know not the least advantage of our understanding, or our learning, unless we make a proper use of them. *Knowing a great deal*, and *having read a great many books*, will be of no service to us, unless we are careful to make a proper use of that knowledge, and to *improve* by what we read, otherwise the time we so bestow is but lost, and we might as well spend the whole of our lives in idleness.

" Always remember, therefore, my loves, that the whole end of our taking the trouble to instruct you, or putting ourselves to the expence of sending you to school, or your attending to what is taught you, is, that you may grow *better men and women* than you otherwise would be; and unless,

therefore, you do improve it, we might as well spare ourselves the pains and expence, and you need not take the trouble of learning; since, if you will act wickedly, all our labour is but thrown away to no manner of purpose.

“ Poor Mr. and Mrs. *Sharply*, how I pity them! What sorrow must they endure to behold their son acting in the manner you have described; for nothing can give so much concern to a fond parent’s heart, as to see their children, for whom they have taken so much pains, turn out naughty; and to *deceive* and *cheat*! What can be worse than that? I hope, my dear children, you will never, any of you, give us that dreadful misery. I hope, my dear *Tom*, I hope you will never learn any of those detestable ways your brother has been telling you of. And if it was not that you will often be obliged to see such things when you mix with other children, I should be sorry you should even hear of such bad actions, as I could wish you to pass through life without so much as knowing such wickedness ever existed: but that is impossible. There are so many naughty people in the world, that you will often be obliged to see and hear of crimes, which



which I hope you will shudder to think of committing yourselves; and by being warned of them beforehand, I hope it will put you more upon your guard, not to be tempted upon any consideration to give the least encouragement to them, much less to practise them yourselves.

“ Perhaps, Tom, if your brother had not, by telling us of Sharpley’s tricks, given me an opportunity of warning you how extremely *wrong* and *wicked* they are, you might, when you were at school, have thought them very *clever*, and marks of *genius*; and therefore, like other of the boys, have tried to imitate them, and by that mean have become as *wicked*, *mean*, and *dishonourable* yourself. And only think how it would have grieved your poor mamma and me, to find the next holidays, our dear little Tom, instead of being that *honest*, *open*, *generous hearted* boy he now is, changed into a *deceiver*, a *cheat*, a *liar*, one whom we could place no trust or confidence in: for, depend upon it, the person who will when at *play* behave unfairly, would not scruple to do so in every other action of his life. And the boy who will deceive for the sake of a marble, or the girl who would act ungenerously for the sake of a doll’s cap or a pin, will, when grown up, be ready to *cheat* and *over-reach* in their *trades*, or any affairs they may have to transact. And you may assure yourselves, that numbers of people who are every year hanged, began at *first* to be wicked, by practising those little, *dishonourable*, *mean* ac-
tions.

tions, which so many children are too apt to do at play, without thinking of their evil consequences.

"I think, my dear," said he, (turning to his wife) "I have heard you mention a person you were acquainted with when a girl, who at last was hanged for stealing, I think, was not she?" "No," replied the lady, "She was not hanged, she was transported for one and twenty years." "Pray, madam, how transported? what is that?" inquired one of the children. "People, my dear," resumed the lady, "are transported when they have committed crimes, which, according to the laws of our land, are not thought quite wicked enough to be hanged for; but still too bad to suffer them to continue amongst other people. So, instead of hanging them, the judge orders that they shall be sent on board a ship, built on purpose to hold naughty people, and be carried away from all their friends a great many, many miles distant, commonly to *America*, where they are sold as slaves, to work very hard for as many years as they are transported for. And the person your papa mentioned was sold for twenty-one years; but she died before that time was out, as most of them do; for they are generally

rally used very cruelly, and work very hard; and besides, the heat of the climate seldom agrees with any body who has been used to live in *England*, and so they generally die before their time is expired, and never have an opportunity of seeing their friends any more, after they are once sent away. How should any of you, my dears, like to be sent away from your papa and me, and your brothers and sisters, and uncles and aunts, and all your friends, and *never, never* see us any more; and only keep company with naughty, cross, wicked people, and labour very hard, and suffer a great deal of sickness, and such a number of different hardships, you cannot imagine? Only think how shocking it must be! How should you like it?" "O! not at all, not at all," was echoed from every one in the room.

" But such," rejoined their mother, " is the punishment naughty people have; and such was the punishment the person your papa spoke of had; who, when she was young, no more expected to come to such an end than any of you do. I was very well acquainted with her, and often used to play with her, and she (like the boy *Frank* has been

been talking of) used to think it a mark of *cleverness* to be able to deceive; and for the sake of winning the game she was engaged in, would not scruple committing any little unfair action, which would give her the advantage.

I remember one time, at such a trifling game as *push-pin*, she gave me a very bad opinion of her; for I observed, instead of pushing the pin as she ought to do, she would try to lift it up with her finger a little, to make it cross over the other.

And when we were at cards, she would peep, to find out the pictured ones, that she might have them in her own hand.

And when we played at any game which had forfeits, she would try, by different little artifices, to steal back her own before the time of *crying them* came; or, if she was the person who was to *cry them* (as you call it) she would endeavour to see whose came next, that she might order the penalty accordingly.

Or if we were playing at *hide and seek*, she would put what we had to hide, either in her own pocket, or throw it into the fire, so that it would be impossible to find it; and then, after making her companions hunt

hunt for it an hour, till their patience was quite tired, and they *gave out*; she would burst out into a loud laugh, and say she only did it for *fun*. But, for my part, I never could see any joke in such kind of things; the *meanness*, the *baseness*, and *dishonour* which attended it, always, in my opinion, took off all degree of *cleverness* or *pleasure* from such actions.



“ There

“ There was another of her *fly* tricks which I forgot to mention, and that was, if at tea, or any other time, she got first to the plate of cake or bread, she would place the piece she liked best, where she thought it would come to her turn to have it; or if at breakfast, she saw her sister’s basin have the under crust in it, and they happened not to be by, or to see her, she would take it out, and put her own, which she happened not to like so well, in the stead.

“ Only think, my dears, what frightful, fly, naughty tricks to be guilty of! And from practising these, which she said there was no *harm* in, and she only did them in *play*, and for a *bit of fun*, at last she came by degrees, to be guilty of greater. She, two or three different times, when she was not seen, stole things out of shops; and one day, when she was upon a visit, and thought she could do it *cleverly*, without being discovered, put a couple of table-spoons into her pocket. The footman who was waiting happened to see her; but fearing to give offence, he took no notice of it till after she was gone home, when he told his master, who, justly provoked at being so ill treated, by a person to whom he had shown every civility,

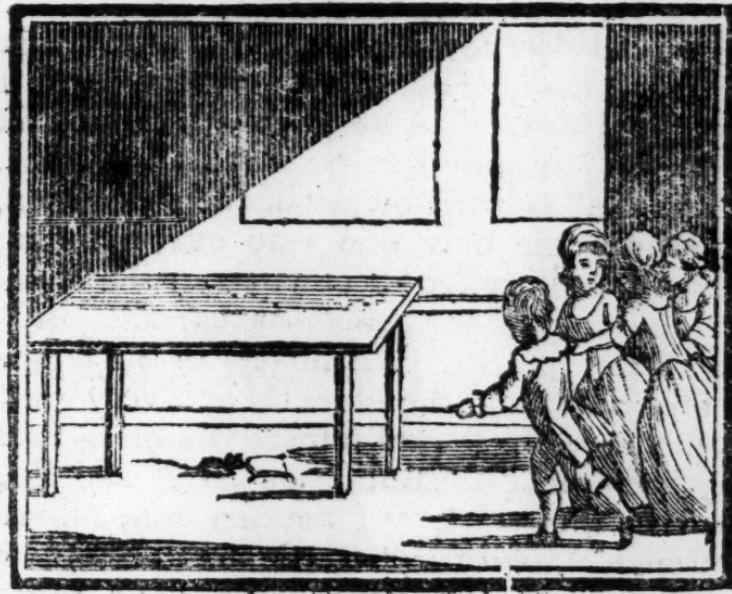
civility, went after her, called in her own two maids, and his footman, as witnesses, and then insisted upon examining her pockets, where he indeed found his own two spoons. He then sent for proper officers to secure her, had her taken into custody, and for that offence it was that she was transported.

“ Thus, my dear children, you see the shocking consequence of ever suffering such vile habits to grow upon us; and I hope the example of this unhappy woman (which I assure you is a *true* story) will be sufficient to warn you from ever, for a single time, being guilty of so detestable a crime; lest you should, like her, by degrees come to experience her fatal punishment.

Just as the lady said these words, a bell rang, and all getting up together, they went out of the room, the young one calling out, “ To dinner! to dinner! to dinner! here we all go to dinner! ”

And I will seek for one too, said I to myself, (creeping out as soon as I found I was alone) for I feel very faint and hungry. I looked and looked about a long while, for I could move but slow on account of the bruises I had received in the shoe. At last, under

under the table round which the family had been fitting, I found a pincushion; which, being stuffed with bran, afforded me enough to satisfy my hunger, but was excessively dry and unsavory: yet, bad as it was, I was obliged to be content at that time with it; and had nearly done eating when the door opened, and in ran two or three of the children. Frightened out of my sences al-



most, I had just time to escape down a little hole in the floor, made by one of the knots in the wood slipping out, and there I heard one of the girls exclaim :

“ O dear! who now has cut my pincushion? it was you did it, *Tom*.” “ No, indeed I did not,” replied he. “ Then it was *you, Mary*.” “ No, I know nothing of it,” answered she. “ Then it was *you, Hetty*.” “ That I am *sure* it was not,” said she; “ I am *sure*, I am *certain* it was not me; I am *positive* it was not.” “ Ah!” replied the other, “ I dare say it was.” “ Yes, I think it is most *likely*,” said *Mary*. “ And so do I too,” said *Tom*. “ And pray *why* do you all think so?” inquired *Hetty*, in an angry tone. “ Because,” said the owner of the pincushion, “ you are the only one who ever tell fibs; you told a story, you know, about the fruit; you told a story too about the currant jelly; and about putting your fingers in the butter at breakfast; and therefore there is very great reason *why* we should suspect you more than any body else.” “ But I am *sure*,” said she, bursting into tears, “ I am *very* sure I have not meddled with it.” “ I do not at all know that,” replied the other; and I do think it was you; for I am certain if any body else

else had done it, they would not deny it; and it could not come in this condition by itself, *somebody* must have done it, and I dare say it was you; so say no more about it."

Here the dispute was interrupted by somebody calling them out of the room; and I could not help making some reflections on what had passed. How dreadful a crime, thought I, is lying and falsity; to what sad mortifications does it subject the person who is ever wicked enough to commit it; and how does it expose them to the contempt of every one, and make them be suspected of faults they are even perfectly free from. Little *Hetty* now is as innocent, with respect to the pincushion with which her sister charges her, as any of the others; yet, because she has before forfeited her *honour*, she can gain no credit: no one believes what she says, she is thought to be guilty of the double fault of spoiling the pincushion, and what is still worse, of lying to conceal it; whilst the other children are at once believed, and their words depended upon.

Surely, surely, thought I, if people would but reflect upon the *contempt*, the *shame*, and the *difficulties* which lies expose them to, they

would never be guilty of so terrible a vice; which subjects them to the scorn of all they converse with, and renders them at all times suspected, even though they *should*, as in the case of *Hetty*, really speak the truth. Such were my reflections upon *falsehood*; nor could I help altogether blaming the owner of the pincushion for her hasty judgement relating to it. *Somebody*, she was certain *must* have done it; it was impossible it could come so by itself. That, to be sure, was very true, but then she never recollects that it *was possible* a little *Mouse* might put it in that condition. Ah! thought I to myself, what pity is it, that human creatures, who are blessed with understanding, and faculties so superior to my species, should not make better use of them; and learn from daily experience, to grow wiser and better for the future: this one instance of the pincushion, may teach (and surely people engaged in life must hourly find more) how dangerous it is to draw too hasty conclusions, and to condemn people upon suspicion, as also the many great and bad consequences of *lying*.

Scarcely had I finished these soliloquies when a great knock at the house-door made

me give such a start, that I fell off the joist on which I was standing, and then ran straight forwards till I came out at a little hole I found in the bricks above the parlour window; from that I descended into the road, and went on unmolested till I reached a malt-house, about whose various apartments, never staying long in the same, I continued to live; till one night, all on a sudden, I was alarmed by fire, which obliged me to retreat with the greatest expedition.

I passed numberless rats and mice in my way, who, like myself, were driven forth by the flames; but, alas! among them I found not my brother. Despairing, therefore, of ever seeing him again, I determined if possible to find my way back to you, who before had shown me such kindness. Numberless were the fatigues and difficulties I had to encounter in my journey here; one while in danger from hungry cats, at another almost perished with cold and want of food.

But it is needless to enumerate every particular; I should but tire your patience were I to attempt it; so I will hasten to a conclusion of my history, only telling you how you came to find me in that melancholy

condition from which your mercy has now raised me.

I came into your house one evening, concealed in the middle of a floor-cloth, which the maid had rolled up and set at the outside of the back-door, whilst she



swept the passage, and neglected to take in again till the evening. In that I hid myself, and upon her laying it down ran with all speed down the cellar stairs, where I continued

tinued till the family were all gone to-bed. Then I returned back, and came into your closet, where the scent of some figs tempted me to get into the jar in which you found me. I concealed myself amongst them, and, after feasting most deliciously, fell asleep, from which I was awaked by hearing a voice say, "Who has left the cover off the fig-jar?" and at the same time I was involved in darkness by having it put on. In vain I endeavoured to remove it, the figs were so low, that when I stood on them I could but just touch it with my lips, and the jar being stone, I could not possibly fasten my nails to hang by the side.

In this dismal situation, therefore, I was constrained to stay; my apprehensions, each day increasing as my food diminished, till at last, after feeding very sparingly for some days, it was quite exhausted; and I had endured the inexpressible tortures of hunger for three days and three nights, when you happily released me, and by your compassion restored me once more to life and liberty. Condescend, therefore, to preserve that life you have so lengthened, and take me under your protection.

"That most gladly," interrupted I, "I will

will do; you shall live in this large, green-flowered tin cannister, and run in and out when you please, and I will keep you constantly supplied with food. But I must now shut you in, for the cat has this moment entered the room."

And now I cannot take leave of all my little readers, without once more begging them, for their own sakes, to endeavour to follow all the good advice the *Mouse* has been giving them: and likewise warning them to shun all those vices and follies, the practice of which render children so *contemptible* and *twisted*.



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